

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM

SUBJECT: MBFR EXPLORATORY TALKS JUNE 2-8, 1973

1. THE SOVIETS HAVE REFUSED TO AGREE TO A SPECIFIC DATE FOR MBFR NEGOTIATIONS AND HAVE PROPOSED THAT THE ISSUE SHOULD BE LEFT IN ABEYANCE PENDING COMPLETION OF CSCE. WE INTEND TO RESPOND THAT WE CANNOT ACCEPT THIS APPROACH AND THAT WE STAND BY OUR POSITION. A FINAL COMMUNIQUE FOR THE EXPLORATORY TALKS HAS BEEN LARGELY AGREED, THE MAJOR OUTSTANDING ISSUES BEING THE DATE AND SITE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE NAC HAS FORWARDED THE TEXT OF MBFR GUIDELINES TO THE ALLIANCE MINISTERS, WITH TWO IMPORTANT POINTS LEFT FOR RESOLUTION IN COPENHAGEN.

2. CSCE/ MBFR LINKAGE - THE SOVIETS HAVE REJECTED OUR APPEAL TO AGREE TO BEGIN MBFR NEGOTIATIONS NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 30. IN A RESPONSE TO OUR MBFR REPRESENTATIVE IN
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VIENNA, THEY HAVE PROPOSED A COMMUNIQUE FORMULATION WHICH WOULD LEAVE THE DATE OPEN AND WHICH WOULD STATE:

- THE DATE WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE DIRECT PARTICIPANTS;
- THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL BEGIN BEFORE THE END OF 1973.

HOWEVER, THE SOVIETS INJECTED AN ELEMENT OF AMBIGUITY INTO THE LATTER POINT BY ADDING THAT THE BEGINNING OF MBFR NEGOTIATIONS " SHOULD BE DETERMINED TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE TIME OF COMPLETION OF THE EUROPEAN CONFERENCE." WE PLAN TO RESPOND THAT THIS POSITION IS UNACCEPTABLE. WE WILL AGAIN CALL UPON THE SOVIETS TO HONOR THE COMMITMENT IN THEIR NOTE OF SEPTEMBER 12, 1972 TO BEGIN MBFR NEGOTIATIONS IN SEPTEMBER- OCTOBER 1973 AND WILL REITERATE THAT UNLESS THEY AGREE TO INITIATING MBFR NEGOTIATIONS BY OCTOBER 30, THERE WILL BE NO PROGRESS IN THE SECOND STAGE OF CSCE. WE INTEND ALSO TO POINT OUT THAT THE SOVIET POSITION MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO CONCLUDE THE VIENNA TALKS SOON.

3. IN THE MEANTIME, THE CANADIANS, AFTER MAKING DEMARCHES IN BOTH EASTERN AND WESTERN CAPITALS THREATENING TO WITHHOLD CANADIAN APPROVAL OF A DATE FOR THE INITIAL CSCE UNTIL AN MBFR DATE WAS AGREED, DECIDED NOT TO BLOCK THE WESTERN CONSENSUS AND JOINED ALL THE ALLIES AT HELSINKI IN AD REFERENDUM ACCEPTANCE OF JULY 3 AS THE OPENING DATE FOR CSCE.

4. MBFR GUIDELINES - AFTER SEVERAL WEEKS' WORK, THE NAC FORWARDED TO MINISTERS DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR MBFR NEGOTIATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE COPENHAGEN MINISTERIAL SESSION. THE TEXT IS LARGELY IN CONSONANCE WITH OUR APPROACHES PAPER. HOWEVER, IT CONTAINS A NUMBER OF BRACKETED POINTS, TWO OF THEM IMPORTANT. ONE CONCERNS THE ISSUE, LONG CONTESTED IN THE ALLIANCE, OF THE AREA TO BE COVERED BY MBFR CONSTRAINTS AND NON- CIRCUMVENTION MEASURES. THERE IS STRONG DISAGREEMENT AMONG THE ALLIES WHETHER THESE ; SHOULD APPLY TO TERRITORIES BEYOND THE REDUCTION ZONE. THE OTHER UNRESOLVED ISSUE CONCERNS THE ALL- IMPORTANT QUESTION WHETHER NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD, AS MOST OF THE ALLIES WISH, INITIALLY FOCUS ON STATIONED FORCES OR SHOULD, AS THE GERMANS CURRENTLY PREFER, DEAL WITH BOTH STATIONED AND
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INDIGENOUS FORCES.

5. FINAL MBFR COMMUNIQUE - IN VIENNA, EAST- WEST REPRESENTATIVES MADE FURTHER PROGRESS TOWARD A FINAL AGREED COMMUNIQUE FOR THE EXPLORATORY TALKS. THE SOVIETS ACCEPTED EXPLICIT MENTION OF UNDIMINISHED SECURITY AS THE BASIS FOR ANY MBFR AGREEMENTS AND ADOPTED WESTERN FORMULATIONS ON A NUMBER OF

OTHER POINTS. HOWEVER, THEY CONTINUE TO REJECT A REFERENCE
TO "BALANCED" IN THE DESCRIPTION OF THE TALKS AND HAVE NOT
AGREED ON EITHER A DATE OR A SITE FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS IN
THE LIGHT OF THEIR POSITION ON CSCE LINKAGE, AS NOTED
ABOVE. RUSH

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